

d) Remarks.

Applicant has amendmended claims 1, 5, 11, 13, 14, 21, 22, and 42. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification. Specifically, support for the amendment to claims 1, 21, 22 and 42 can be found in the specification at page 4, paragraph [0021], and also in the Figures and the original claims. Support for the amendment to claims 5, 14 and 22 can be found in the specification at page 4, paragraph [0020], and also in the Figures and the original claims. Support for the amendment to claim 2 can be found in the specification at page 5, paragraph [0028], page 6, paragraph [0030], and also in the Figures and the original claims. Support for the amendment to claims 11 and 22 can be found in the specification at page 7, paragraph [0034], and also in the Figures and the original claims. No new matter or new issues have been introduced with these amendments and Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments be entered. Accordingly, claims 1-9, 11-32, and 39-43 are pending.

Remarks Regarding 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 6-9, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 42 and 43 stand rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly anticipated by Prosen (U.S. Patent No. 5,035,558). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and incorporates herein all of Applicant's remarks that were made with respect to Prosen in the prosecution history of this application.

Specifically, the Examiner contends that Prosen discloses all of the elements of Applicant's invention as recited in independent claims 1, 21, and 42. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Applicant respectfully notes that the invention, as claimed, was surprisingly discovered (see Specification, page 3, paragraph [0019]). No other device is known by Applicant to have the ease of use and versatility of the claimed invention, yet provide the same degree of security of connection. The grip provides securing power precisely where it is needed, for the hook portion. No complex manipulations are required and the device is instantly understandable on sight by most anyone.

Prosen is directed to what appears to be a fairly complex design, which nevertheless amounts to a one piece hook device. Applicant respectfully asserts that this device is not immediately understandable by one skilled in the art (much less the average consumer), nor is it broadly versatile. There is no grip portion, no three sections to the hook portion, no angles

to the hook portion sections, no straight sections at all (see claims 21 and 42 and compare to Prosen Figures 1-8), much less perpendicular angles (see claim 1), and no interconnections between the grip, hook and attachment portions (see claims 1 and 42). Because Prosen's device is one piece (see Prosen, any of Figures 1-8), there are no nor can there be three interconnected pieces. Unlike Applicant's claimed invention, Prosen's device has a pinch section terminal to the hook portion that has nothing to do with separation of the grip portion from the attachment portion (see claim 15) or preventing a cord attached to the attachment portion from entering the grip portion (see claim 16). Furthermore, the alleged grip section of the Prosen device is a hole, which Applicant respectfully asserts would not provide the same degree of force to the hook portion in large part because the hole is positioned within and not adjacent to the hook section (e.g. see any Figure of Prosen). Applicant's claimed invention specifically recites that the grip section is adjacent to the hook section. Thus, the Prosen device is not nor does it disclose or suggest anything like Applicant's claimed invention.

In addition, the Prosen device is flat, and not formed from a single shaped rod (see claim 43), nor is the shaped rod rounded (see claim 11). The curved hook portion has no sections, but in addition, the curve is continuous and each hook section is the same length, whereas the claims invention has one embodiment wherein the first section is longer than the second section (see claim 6), one embodiment wherein the second section is longer than the third section (see claim 7), and one embodiment wherein at least two of the first, second and third sections are in parallel two-dimensional planes (see claim 8). No such features or embodiments are disclosed or suggested in Prosen or in any of the cited references and Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Solely to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended the independent claims to further clarify the invention. For example, Applicant has amended claims 1, 21, 22 and 42 to indicate that the hook portion comprises multiple straight portion and that the hook portion, when attached to a connecting surface, spreads force applied by the hook portion across said connecting surface. No such hook portion is disclosed or suggested in Prosen or by any of the cited references. Applicant has also amended claim 22 to recite that the grip is ergonomically molded and that the hook contains multiple straight portions, again, nothing like the device of Prosen.

Thus, as explained above, Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 6-9, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 42 and 43, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), be withdrawn.

Remarks Regarding 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Claims 2-5, 12, 13, 22-24, 26-28, 30 and 31 stand rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Chaun (U.S. Patent No. 4,831,692). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The remarks above regarding Prosen are specifically incorporated by reference as are Applicant's remarks made in response to prior Office Actions. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Chaun does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn.

Applicant respectfully asserts that an attachment portion and a grip portion that are interconnected is not disclosed or suggested by Prosen, nor is the aspect that the hook portion is composed of three straight portions. Furthermore, Applicant has amended the independent claims to include the feature that the hook portion, when attached to a connecting surface, spreads force applied by the hook portion across said connecting surface.

Further, Applicant repeats and incorporates Applicant's prior remarks, namely, that any modification of the of the Chaun device as suggested by the Office Action would not yield the clasp of claim 2. The open slot 2221 of Chuan, like the slot 14 of Prosen is not interconnected as recited in claim 1, from which claim 2 depends. Therefore, even if Prosen and Chuan were combined all of the elements of claim 2 would still not be taught or suggested and, thus, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

With respect to claims 12, 13, 22-24, 26-28, 30 and 31, the attachment portion and the grip portion that are interconnected as recited in Applicant's claims are not suggested by the combination of Prosen with Chaun.

Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts that the rejection of claims 2-5, 12, 13, 22-24, 26-28, 30 and 31, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), is overcome and Applicant respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

B. Claims 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Simon (U.S. Patent No. 3,328,064). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant incorporates the remarks made above with regard to Prosen. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with

Simon does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

C. Claim 29 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Chaun, and in further view of Simon. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant incorporates the remarks made above with regard to Prosen. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Chaun and Simon does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

D. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Yonts (U.S. Patent No. 4,842,236). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant incorporates the remarks made above with regard to Prosen. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Yonts does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. The Examiner states that Yonts suggests that placing the grip portion 10 so that the first section separates the grip portion from the second and third sections of the hood portion. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The arguments above regarding Prosen are specifically incorporated by reference. Specifically, an attachment portion and a grip portion that are interconnected is not suggested by the combination of Prosen and Yonts. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

E. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Yonts (U.S. Patent No. 4,842,236). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant incorporates the remarks made above with regard to Prosen and Yonts. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Yonts does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

F. Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Schrader (U.S. Patent No. 6,113,327). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant incorporates the remarks made above with regard to Prosen. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Schrader does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

G. Claim 32 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Prosen in view of Chaun, and in further view of Schrader. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant's remarks above regarding Prosen are specifically incorporated by reference. Further, Applicant specifically notes that an attachment portion and a grip portion that are interconnected is not taught or even suggested by Prosen. As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Chaun and Schrader does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

H. Claims 39 and 41 stand rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Schwab (U.S. Patent No. 5,797,167), in view of Prosen. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant's remarks above regarding Prosen are specifically incorporated by reference. Specifically, the attachment portion and the grip portion that are interconnected is not suggested by the combination Schwab and Prosen. Furthermore, with respect to Schwab, the Office Action contends that Schwab "*teaches a securing device comprising a plurality of cords 1, 2 having two ends appose, wherein one end of each cord is connected to one other cord at a single position 7 and the other ends of the cords are connected to a clasp 8 to define a symmetric structure at each end.*" However, reference numbers 7 and 8 are actually both clasps on either end of the apparatus. Furthermore, cords 1 and 2 extend from clasp 7 to clasp 8. Thus, each end of cords 1 and 2 are connected to a clasp and both ends of cord 1 and 2 are connected together at each clasp. Therefore, Schwab does not suggest "*one end of each cord is connected to one or more other cords at a single position and wherein the other ends of the cords are connected to the clasp*" (emphasis added) as recited by Applicant's claim 39.

As Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, the combination with Schwab does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. The combination of Schwab and Prosen do not suggest the invention of claims 39 and 41 and Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

I. Claim 40 stands rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over Schwab, in view of Prosen, and in further view of Vasilopoulos (U.S. Patent No. 5,722,125). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The arguments above regarding Prosen and Schwab are specifically incorporated by reference. Specifically, an attachment portion and a grip portion that are interconnected is not taught or even suggested by Prosen and “one end of each cord is connected to one or more other cords at a single position and wherein the other ends of the cords are connected to the clasp” is not taught or even suggested by Schwab. As Schwab and Prosen does not disclose or suggest Applicant’s claimed invention, the combination with Vasilopoulos does not cure the noted deficiencies and this rejection can be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the application and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

If there are any issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner’s Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this Responsive Amendment, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge **Deposit Account No. 14-1437 for any such fees, referencing Attorney Docket No. 8106.002.US**; and Applicant hereby petitions for any needed extension of time not otherwise accounted for with this submission.

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